DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER

JUNE 1941

DOCUMENTARY—THE CREATIVE INTERPRETATION OF REALITY

VOL 2 No 6 PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY FILM CENTRE 34 SOHO SQUARE LONDON W1 FOURPENCE

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More Guts

THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION has never recovered from the wounds to its self-esteem which were inflicted during early battles with press, parliament and public. Nowadays, in its relations with other Government Departments, the Ministry too often occupies the rôle of a wounded dog which is set upon by the rest of the pack and viciously mauled at every opportunity. In the public interest it is high time that it fought back and established for itself a position of equality. Until it does so it cannot function efficiently. At present the Ministry tends to come off worst in all inter-departmental combats, even in those cases where it is manifestly in the right. There are few Government Departments which are justified in the general assumption that other departments are more efficient than the M.O.I., but most other Departments enjoy the psychological advantage of having been able to avoid the public exposure of their errors. They have sometimes contrived to do so by using the young and inexperienced Ministry of Information as a scapegoat for their own deficiencies.

The M.O.I. is often made to fight battles with other Departments on issues in which these Departments should not even dare to interfere, and too often these battles are lost by the Ministry, against all sense of the public interest. This has become particularly noticeable in such matters as the choice of subjects and styles for film propaganda, in the provision by other Departments of facilities for the making of M.O.I. films, and in the postponement of the military service of film-making personnel essential to the fulfilment of important M.O.I. needs. In almost every case these are matters in which the M.O.I. Films Division should have a final say, and until it is given sufficient authority to stand up for itself, it cannot hope to use films in the manner it presumably wishes.

More Money Please

LIKE EVERYTHING else, the cost of film-making has gone up—in all departments. Stock costs more, so does transport, so do location expenses. And delays, both at script-stage and during production, cost more than everything else put together. This fact has undoubtedly been realised by the Films Division of the M.O.I., and there has been a fairly steady increase in the allocations for films during the past few months. Nevertheless there is some feeling that the increases are still lagging rather behind the actual costs which film-making today incurs; possibly improved financial conditions are in part being retarded by the tendency of some of the Studios to make films at rates which are in fact uneconomic, since they do not include even minimum overhead costs and therefore come into the category of direct under-cutting. Whatever official opinions may be regarding the costing methods of this or that documentary unit, we are not certain whether official sponsors—and in particular the Films Division of the Ministry of Information—realise fully how difficult it is becoming for reputable units to turn out films which will, in quality not quantity, satisfy themselves as well as the Government sponsors for whom they are made. Recognisable brute costs are, of course, accepted, e.g. the purchase tax on raw stock; but no provision seems to be made for the heart-breaking delays which seem to be the doom of 90 per cent of official films. We can readily understand that under the present lay-out of civil service procedure the Ministry of Information Films Division, for instance, must find such delays unavoidable; but no real cognizance of the actual loss to the producing units has yet been taken. Some people, too, are beginning to measure, with some acerbity, the gap between the production money on their own films and the money allocated for Crown Film Unit productions. This is no disparagement of the Crown Film Unit—quite the reverse. A film like *Merchant Seamen* is well worth whatever it cost. But why does no other unit ever get a tithe of the amount? It is time to consider whether some of the documentary units are not letting their enthusiasm lead them into an uneconomic position which will, in the end, do all parties harm.

Progressive Committees

WE WELCOME manifestoes received from the 1940 Committee, which is concerned with planning and reconstruction, and from the 1941 Committee, which is similarly conceived and which expresses opinions long voiced in DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER. The 1940 Committee announces the setting up of a Films Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr. Julian Huxley, which is already in touch both with the M.O.I. and the British Council. The 1941 Committee states, with critical emphasis, the democratic attitude towards the war effort. Its policy is in many aspects one which might more boldly be carried into the realm of our propaganda films.

A Kite is Flown?

RECENT RUMOURS that the director of the Films Division of the M.O.I. (J. L. Beddington) and his honorary adviser (Sydney Bernstein) were to resign, and to be superseded by some person or persons unknown, have now been denied. The operative word in this case was always rumour, and in our opinion there is little importance to be attached to such unauthorised statements. Had there been anything more to the story than a few feathers from the mare's nest, it would no doubt have proved to be an ill-advised kite flown by interested parties.

This journal has never attempted to pretend that the M.O.I. Films Division was or is perfect. We have, on the contrary, taken every opportunity to voice constructive criticisms in the hope of helping progressive elements in the Division in their struggle for a more enlightened production programme. It is, however, necessary, in view of the rumours already mentioned, to remind our readers that despite its failings the Films Division is almost alone among the M.O.I. Divisions in showing practical results for its efforts.

Central Film Library

THE FIRST CATALOGUE of the Central Film Library has now been issued, and consists of 100 films, available on 35 mm. and 16 mm. to any organisations which own or have access to film projectors. The catalogue contains only those films which have been produced or acquired by the Ministry of Information since the war broke out, and this represents a highly gratifying addition to the large number of documentaries already available from the G.P.O. and Empire Film Libraries which have now come under the control of the Central Library. Everyone interested in the use of films for public enlightenment must obtain and use this catalogue which nobly represents a highly important side of the biggest educational film movement which this or any other country has ever undertaken.

Film News

"FILM NEWS," the publication of American Film Center, now appears in a gay, new and more expensive format. It contrives excellently to fulfil its advertised purpose of giving "World Wide News of Documentary and Educational Motion Pictures" beneath a bright arresting cover which changes its colour each month. There is no doubt that the American documentary movement is forging ahead at a grand pace, and it will be interesting to see what effect the growing demand for films on military preparedness has upon future activities. There appears to be a certain apprehension amongst documentary makers themselves lest the demand for military films should restrict production in other and equally important national fields of propaganda, instruction and reportage.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE

In order to keep DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER up to its present size and standard it is necessary for us to increase the price from 4*d*. to 6*d*. per copy as from the July issue. Our readers will no doubt understand that the increased costs attendant on war conditions make this extra two pence inevitable. Subscriptions taken out on and after July 1st will therefore be 6*s*. per annum or 3*s*. per six months. Organisations who have bulk orders for the NEWS LETTER can obtain special reductions on application.

WHERE DO WE STAND?

DOCUMENTARIES are in the forefront of the war effort. The output of the main units runs into hundreds of films a year, covers a great diversity of subject matter, and meets the demands of official and semi-official bodies in these islands, in India, and in Canada.

All this was by no means a foregone conclusion at the beginning of the war. A glance at the back files of D.N.L. is sufficient to reveal the reluctance with which the documentary method was accepted as a machine already fully equipped to be geared to the needs of film propaganda. The realisation that documentaries were not merely a most effective but also a most economic propaganda weapon, did, however, once it was established, mean that the full energies of all documentary workers were harnessed to a propaganda drive which, if size and numbers are any criterion, represents the most spectacular use of films for a communal purpose ever achieved in the world. Films of all sorts and kinds are ordered ten or twenty at a time; immense circulation schemes are put into operation, ranging from the weekly five-minute films in the cinemas to the elaborate coverage of the M.O.I. non-theatrical scheme; overseas, the wondrous sight is seen of British shorts passing through 15,000 U.S.A. movie-houses with the rapidity of a dose of cascara, and providing Spitfires on their distribution proceeds. Nor is there any sign of abatement in the number of films required by the M.O.I., the Service Departments, the British Council, and the increasing number of commercial sponsors who are gearing their peacetime public relations machinery to national film needs in wartime.

Now it is only too easy, in view of this big output and the resultant acute pressure of work, to assume that all is well with our film propaganda at the present time, and to assume further that documentary, because it is being widely used, is advancing on the right lines. This may well be so; but the time has come to take stock.

The position of documentary in wartime is fundamentally determined by its previous achievements during its ten years of rapid and influential peacetime development. It was because documentary was conceived and nurtured as a new weapon in the cause of imaginative public enlightenment (and therefore of social progress) that it is a most practical, and certainly a most immediately useful weapon in the emergency of war. With an ever growing peacetime public, among which could be numbered not merely the adult progressives, but also the school and student groups in whose hands the country's future should ultimately rest; with a moderate but in many ways significant penetration to the screens of the public cinemas; with an ever growing reputation and influence in overseas countries; and, above all, with a policy of constructive social propaganda which was divorced from any of the tints of political shirtings; the documentary movement could clearly be relied on to achieve, with considerable efficiency, two objects.

The first object is the putting across, in the best possible film terms, of any message of morale, information or propaganda which government departments and other official bodies might from time to time think desirable. It can be claimed that documentary workers are experts at putting messages across; the only limitation to their work would be their refusal to be party to the plugging of reactionary or fascist messages if, as indeed has not yet been the case, they were asked to do so. The second object is far more important and far more difficult of achievement, being the attempt to improve or clarify the content of our official propaganda messages if, on careful collected evidence, they clearly fall short of effectiveness, human understanding, or even decency. It is idle to argue that this second object should not be necessary; far better to accept the fact that under present circumstances it might well become vital.

Considering first the manner in which documentary has put across the ideas and messages which it has been given during the last eighteen months, it is pretty clear that there is little cause for complaint. The subjects and methods of approach have been extremely varied; and the films have been designed for and distributed to widely varying audiences both at home and overseas. These wartime documentaries have been seen by more persons than ever before. Richard Griffith, in a letter which appears on another page of this issue, expresses a point of view shared by a number of people in the U.S.A. when he refers to documentary's "upgrade" during the war. On the other hand, private correspondence from the U.S.A. says of our wartime films that "the films are grand but we are not so sure about the message they carry". These two points of view, coming from persons who are not implicated in the day-to-day hurly-burly, indicate pretty clearly the discrepancy of achievement between the two objects already referred to.

Since documentary makers are propagandists working in a medium of public information they are bound to be deeply concerned with the political issues of the day—political less in the sense of party than in any aspect of the clash between reactionary forces and a forward-looking philosophy. This fact gave pre-war documentary an influence which would have been denied to any movement concerned solely with the art of the film. Believing that this influence was for good, documentary makers have campaigned ceaselessly since the outbreak of war to obtain freedom to use their special abilities, not only as film makers, but as propagandists in the defence of democracy. A comparison between pre-war and present possi-

bilities gives a key to the whole situation. In its early days documentary was able to throw much of its weight into the struggle for social equality and a more equitable distribution of the benefits of civilised life. It was able to produce films which analysed the evils of bad housing, malnutrition, unemployment and bad education. It was concerned not only to expose these evils but to point the way to their redress. Individual documentary makers working through such allied media as *The March of Time* were able to co-operate in the production of films which attacked the early manifestations of Nazism and Fascism in items which, on more than one occasion, were too strongly anti-fascist to be allowed to reach the screens of this country. The fact that a number of documentary makers were too ardently anti-fascist for the comfort of many official bodies in this country is not without a special significance today. The documentary movement is bound to feel that it was early in the field against fascism, and that it can bring to bear upon the present issues a mature and sophisticated eye. It is hard to forget that our present European war against fascism began in Spain, and that we are still in the throes of proving that it was not also lost there. Yet Spanish fascism was (and is) tolerantly regarded by many people who remain in high places in this country, and whose anti-fascism is presumably of very recent and unusual vintage.

Is it then surprising if documentary film-makers occasionally detect a nervousness in some quarters to face the implications of a fully matured anti-fascist policy? This nervousness is reflected in the absence from our war-time screens of the very type of democratic propaganda which represented documentary's most important pre-war contribution. Films of democracy on the social offensive are missing. In the words of Richard de Rochemont, writing to *Sight and Sound* from New York: " . . . films full of progress and action would be infinitely convincing to us that Britain was ready, once the war was won, to do more than merely restore the *status quo ante*." It may be argued that the war must be won before we can speak of a fairer distribution of wealth and opportunity, and of the equalising of social levels. One answer is that such readjustments would assist the national war effort. Another is that any anti-fascist war which is not directed towards a new social ideal is a wanton waste of human life. No lesser objective is capable of mobilising completely the national will to victory.

Because of the absence of any new social vision from our screens, documentary propagandists feel that they are being given no opportunity to combat Nazi propaganda for a New Order with propaganda for social progress by democratic methods. Less complaint can be made about the use which is being made of other functions of documentary. In the field of instruction by film the work which is being done has never been matched anywhere in the world. The films being made are forming the nucleus of a library of instruction in communal life, the value of which will long outlast the war.

The subjects are simple—ranging from the technics of garden, kitchen and farm to the control of disease in tropical countries—but the ultimate social consequences of this attempt to increase the efficiency and, therefore, the fullness of communal life, are incalculable. It is often argued that mechanical invention has made modern life too complex to be grasped as a whole by any but the supernormal intelligence. Fortunately, however, mechanical invention has brought its own solution in the shape of new means of mass education. The urgencies of war have enormously accelerated the development of visual education through non-theatrical channels, and even the widespread employment of films in military training—a use of the film which it is to be hoped will prove of less vital importance in years to come—has lessons to teach the maker of films for instruction in less martial fields. It is to be regretted that these lessons must, at present, almost all be of the nature of "what not to do". In their use of films the sponsoring Service Dpeartments have so far paid less attention to quality than to quantity, and the fact that the instructional film must be used imaginatively seems largely to have escaped their notice. The film is not a weapon with which to bludgeon the recruit trapped, without hope of escape, in the lecture room. It is to be hoped that Army, Navy and Air Force films will soon display some of the production quality of current non-military educational films, and also that they will reveal a broader conception of the educational appetite of Service personnel. There is no reason why the citizen, when he goes into uniform, should be denied the broad social service of films available to him as a civilian.

In the field also of communal reportage, excellent films are being made. Here documentary is able to continue with one of its most important pre-war jobs. Whether the subject of the film is the mirroring of the life and work of ordinary British people, or whether this is an incidental element of a theme, documentary makers are able still to present honest and accurate portrayals of a kind which were regarded in the past as an important aid to the exchange of understanding between socially or geographically separated groups of people.

It is probably true to say that the authenticity of characterisation in documentary production has shown an advance since the outbreak of war, certainly as far as the average level of achievement is concerned. A comparison between the nature of technical treatment before and since the war seems to show that the greater urgencies of production and higher speeds of working have resulted in less experiment, but in a greater assurance and firmness of style. There is little doubt that in the case of films to which the same time and care can be devoted as was customary in peace-time, the general technical level has risen. Unfortunately, production demands are such that these films are few and far between and tend to be those produced by commercial rather than official sponsors. It must, in fact, be borne in mind that commercial sponsors are responsible for many of the very real documentary gains listed above, with the exception of the progress in characterisation, for which the M.O.I. can claim principal credit.

Thus it may be said that while actual production of propaganda films is nearly, if not quite, at capacity, the messages and ultimate purposes of all these films are, in some aspects at least, either inadequate or unworthy of the cause to which they should represent an active and first-class contribution.

Why is this so?

The major reason is almost certainly the complete lack of a directed propaganda policy in this country. Apart from the day-to-day or week-to-week needs of information or instruction, there is absolutely no yardstick by which the real propaganda needs can be measured—and this yardstick is denied even to the Government officials whose job it is to plan the films and to initiate their production. In other words, the sponsors apparently neither know what they want nor are allowed to find out. This situation can only lead to piecemeal and unco-ordinated ordering of films; and this in turn is bound to result in the M.O.I. Films Division being prevented from carrying out its job in the most effective manner. It is said that, given enough time, six monkeys with six typewriters could produce *Paradise Lost;* but that is no argument against Milton, who did it more quickly, and, moreover, knew why he was doing it. This is not to suggest that the people who order Government films don't know what they want; some of them certainly know very well. But the vast inertia of fear and prejudice represented by government departments, party machines and the like, prevents the Films Division from entering upon a well-planned and long-term programme of film production.

This situation again produces a hangover in the film-makers themselves, who are impelled by production demands to rush out film after film, and are, at the same time, hampered in their work by abrupt policy changes, by inter-departmental squabbles, and by heart-breaking delays at almost every stage of production. No wonder that at times there is considerable uncertainty as to whether the films are worth making, since they will either appear months too late, or they will have been so castrated that their basic message (their *raison d'etre*) is no more.

It is generally at this stage in the argument that one is accused of asking for "war aims" and told that Cabinet policy has every good reason to refuse to state any aim except that of winning the war. That is an easy and specious way of sidetracking the main argument, which is this:—

Nobody wanted this war and nobody is enjoying it. There is, however, a general determination to bring it to a successful conclusion. This determination is what we call morale. Morale depends on a belief that blood and death, and indeed the minor discomforts as well, are worth suffering because victory will mean a greater general happiness. What we must look for, if we are good propagandists, is a new light in men's eyes and a new hope in men's hearts. And propaganda works both ways; it can, once the light and hope are understood, both create it directly and also seek it out where it lies latent; and therefore our propaganda campaigns must be based on a forward-looking conception which is prepared here and now for the permanent jettisoning of all the brakes on progress, represented by "bitter greybeards", the mentally stunted reactionaries, and the bloodless bureaucrats who live, of their own free-will, in a Hades of paper, tape and rusting typewriters.

But we must return again to our first point, which deals with the lack of forward-looking democratic themes. Documentary film-makers believe that considerable progress could be made in overcoming this most serious weakness of British screen propaganda, if more use were made of the years of propaganda experience which documentary has already gained in the public service. The most efficient method of utilising the documentary film makers would be to present suitably qualified producers with a list of the democratic ideas which are to be presented to the public, these ideas to derive through the Films Division from the deliberations of an official body of high status which should exist to chart the democratic course which the nation is to follow during the coming years. The film propagandist would thus be provided with nothing more than the ideas which are to be communicated to the public. It would then be the task of the film propagandist to express these ideas in the most appropriate film terms. The subject matter and basic treatment of the films would be his business and his alone. His responsibility would finish only with the successful assimilation of the agreed democratic conceptions by the public. This has been the task of documentary producers for many years; and no professional civil servant is equally qualified to decide what will be the effect of any given subject matter and its cinematic treatment, upon the mind and emotions of an audience. To object to the inclusion of this shot or that shot, or to fiddle with sentences of commentary because of obscure issues of policy, which can be appreciated only by the civil service mind, is to miss the wood for the trees. Considerations of security and military censorship must necessarily be taken into account, but it is high time that there was an increase in the ranks of those few civil servants who have come to realise that the esoteric and complex issues which form so large a part of their personal daily struggles, have no relation to the life of the nation. Film propaganda is not difficult provided that it is tackled simply and directly by an experienced person. His experience will not save him from occasional error, but there is little likelihood that his mistakes will outweigh his successes. The alternative is to wrap up the message in such a layer of departmental memoranda that no active member of society can bother to penetrate it. And if he should chance to do so, the message itself will probably have been lost while the precautionary documents have been accumulating.

The plain fact is that people are too afraid of the possibilities of propaganda. Occasionally you may see them dip a timid toe into the uncharted sea, only to withdraw it hastily and to subside once more on to the beach, there to admire in the pebbles both their general similarity and their subtle individual differences. But while they are playing with their pebbles they are losing one of the greatest opportunities the world has ever seen for revealing, by every means of propaganda, a genuine and entirely vital reason for democracy as opposed to dictatorship.

Meantime, we can promise that the documentary movement will do all it can to switch every film and every subject as nearly as possible to a constructive propaganda plan. As time goes on, we may even manage to give the powers that be a constructive plan. In the meantime it is documentary's main duty to fight for it by all possible means.

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a moving-symbol film about Salvage and Shipping

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MEANWHILE

We welcome the 1940 COUNCIL Film Committee with its members widely representative of the progressive elements in science, education, architecture, journalism, economic and social research, town planning and medicine, and we hope to co-operate with this advisory group on all our films dealing with planning and reconstruction for the future

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NEW DOCUMENTARY FILMS

Home Guard. A Strand film. *Production and direction:* Donald Taylor. *Associate Director:* Iyan Moffat. *Camera:* George Noble. With Bernard Miles.

THE SCENE is a Hertfordshire pub on a spring evening. One of the locals has just returned from a week's Home Guard training at Osterley Park, and is telling his friends all about it. Nothing else happens; yet the film is extremely satisfying. The characterisation is very natural and at no point does the dialogue lapse either into the impossible or the patronising; in fact one of the most remarkable things about the film is the way Bernard Miles gets away with a heavily hackneyed quotation from *King John*, by the simple process of reading it, with apposite comments and explanations, out of a dirty exercise book. Miles' performance is altogether something of a *tour de force*, since it has to stand up to the proximity of five or six people who are the genuine article.

Home Guard, in addition to its general production merits, has style and taste. It is directed and cut with an economy which must have depended on a good shooting script.

A Visit from Canada. *Production:* Realist Film Unit for the M.O.I. 5 minutes.

HERE IS THE traditional English village—proof that the novelist's portrait is no mere fancy. The placid lake, the equally placid swans, the street of whitewash and thatch dominated by the historic pub., are all here. Even the imposition of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, heralded by a convoy of Bren carriers, brings the villagers to their doors, but has little effect on the daily routine. Mrs. Smith provides billets for four men; the officers take over a large furnished house. Willingly they accept the quiet life, make friends of their hosts, play darts in the local and cards in their billets. During the day we see the troops continue their training, hear the clatter of machine guns and the roar of Bren carriers.

A Visit from Canada is designed to show how the Dominion troops are being welcomed in this country: they are real human characters, behind the pint-pot, and show pleasure in their new surroundings. The film is a competent portrayal of these facts. A quiet Canadian voice speaks the commentary whilst the music selected emphasises the peace of the domestic scenes.

Australia at War. *Production:* March of Time (No. 14, Sixth Year). *Distribution:* R.K.O. Radio Pictures. 18 mins.

Australia at War provides an impressive account of the Dominion at war. The Australians number seven million souls, which is less than the population of Greater London; a striking fact when the magnitude of their effort is brought home to one, as it is in this film.

The Australians have to provide men and mechanisms for the defence of their country. The men are as fine and upstanding a breed as you could discover anywhere in the world. Virility is their standard and guts their device. This time they are having to fashion their own weapons, which cannot make their problems any the easier; yet, already they have spared one-eighth of a million trained men in the service of the British Commonwealth.

Besides manufacturing their instruments of warfare they must mine and smelt the virgin metal. Almost unnoticed they are moving up from a position of industrial dependence to one of independence. What is to happen when peace breaks out, to the now fledgling heavy and secondary industries they are building? Do not look to the film for an answer.

Australia at War implies that the Australians have much to fight for besides freedom. For instance, they have the Government help which enables people to own their houses. This, at any rate, is better than our domestic situation which throws up Borders cases. March of Time is inclined to be statistical on many issues, and I wish in this case that it had provided information on how many folk have been thus helped; at what cost to themselves; and at what profit to the builders and the builders' merchants. I must confess that the film was convincing in regard to the scale of Australia's war effort, but unconvincing when it touched on the people's homes and education. To have done the subject justice it might well have been two films, one on "Why We are Fighting", and one on "How We are Fighting".

Defeat Diphtheria. *Production:* Paul Rotha Productions Ltd. for M.O.I. *Direction:* Bladon Peake. *Camera:* Erwin Hillier.

TODAY WHEN most minds are filled with horror at so much destruction of life by warfare it is sometimes forgotten that another war, no less vital, is still being waged against the old enemy—disease. *Defeat Diphtheria* gives one phase of the battle and shows, with the aid of simple and explicit diagrams, the various stages of the disease, how it can be cured and, most important of all, the facilities for its prevention which are available to all who ask for them.

I hope that all parents of young children will see this film; and although the many shots of a hypodermic syringe being pressed into children's arms may cause anticipatory shudders, the stern fact stressed by the commentator that 3,000 children between the ages of one and fifteen die from diphtheria in this country every year, should be sufficient to bring home the urgent necessity for all children to be inoculated against this disease.

This is not merely an instructive film; it carries a vital message to those with young lives in their care, and points out the part they can and must play if doctors and scientists are to be helped in their tireless efforts to make the world a healthier place to live in.

Eating Out with Tommy Trinder. *Production:* Strand for M.O.I. *Direction:* Desmond Dickinson. *Camera:* George Noble. With: Tommy Trinder, Edward Chapman, Marjorie Fielding, Jean Colin. 5 minutes.

YOU WOULD be surprised at what you can eat in the new British Restaurants, and how really cheap it is. Also you have the Trinder warranty that they "never let bygones be rissoles". After seeing the film, I am going out of my way to find one and try for myself.

There is a sensible directive to action—you can have a restaurant in your own district if you press your local council. They will need to find the premises and the staff; the Government will provide the fixtures and fittings and all the rest. I thought some of the fun in the film was porky and only saved by Trinder. The photography is a nice piece of work.

Kill that Rat. *Production:* Publicity Films for the Ministry of Agriculture. *Associate Producer:* Edgar Anstey. *Direction:* Terence Egan Bishop. *Camera:* A. Dinsdale. *Distribution:* Non-T. 1 reel.

ONE FEELS, after having seen this film, that our enemies within the gates are considerably more active than the average man is liable to credit. There may be some criticism of our propaganda drive in relation to the more obvious of our opponents, but this is most certainly not the case with regard to rats. We are told that these pests are responsible for some 25 million pounds worth of damage each year, a very considerable loss in wartime, especially when related mainly to home-grown foodstuffs.

The rat is a sly, cunning beast: he is also an intelligent and industrious worker and, like the arch-villain, devoid of any real moral sensitivity. He lives by looting—is efficient and unscrupulous in his methodology. Perhaps we are unaware of these facts and for that reason facilitate the enemy's task. Poultry is conveniently left unprotected, bags of grain stacked with no apparent thought of looting—the broken window and the board fence offer no problem to the rat. When he stages a mass murder of innocent chicks it is the farmer who is principally at fault for not taking adequate precautions. This film proceeds to illustrate clearly and effectively the line of approach to take in regard to the destruction of rats. Red squill is cited as a useful poison, being harmless to poultry and domestic animals, but as was indicated before, the rat is a wary and fastidious beast and it is advisable to vary the *plat du jour*.

(*Continued on page* 108.)

Throughout the camera work is of a high order. The commentary is clear and emphatic, and the necessity for immediate action is forcefully portrayed. A modern Pied Piper is not just around the corner; the remedy lies in a concerted effort on the behalf of all farmers and landowners.

Green Girdle. *Production:* Strand Film Co. *Producer:* Basil Wright. *Direction:* Ralph Keene. *Camera:* Jack Cardiff. *Commentary:* Bruce Belfrage and Robert McDermott. 2 reels. Technicolor.

FIRSTLY, I want to record one practical fact about the film. This effort of Ralph Keene and Jack Cardiff brings out the stereoscopic value of colour in a most amazing way. If you sit near the screen so that the edges of the picture extend beyond the normal field of vision, you are frequently conscious of going *completely out of the theatre* into the scenes themselves. It is a novel and delightful experience. It is an experience which starts a whole train of questions—how much of the effect is due to changes of focal sharpness in the planes of the picture? How much to the application of the principles of colour perspective? What part do the mixes play (for they are wizard)? I have seen passable colour in films before and ruminated about it, but never have I been so jerked to a realisation of the magnificence and complexity of the problem.

As an essay in colour it is superb.

The subject of *Green Girdle* is the hundred square miles of publicly owned countryside around London. It looks like Arcady but there is a Bank-holidayishness about the people therein. You are touched by the return of the prodigals—by the awkwardness of some of them. Come to think of it, most of our bodies are so inured to tubes, chairs and traffic dodging that when we are set up against the backcloth of nature our muscular economy betrays us. Our shy, surprised minds only heighten our non-correspondence. After the first five minutes or so, the visuals, music and commentary become unusually exhilarating. A rare balance between three is achieved. Richard Adinsell composed the music, Muir Mathieson conducted.

FILM OF THE MONTH

Kipps. *Production:* 20th Century. *Producer:* Edward Black. *Direction:* Carold Reed. With Michael Redgrave.

THE basis of the American film industry has always been solid blocks of "A" pictures. The occasional *Grapes of Wrath* were good for prestige, and the "B" pictures filled in the background, but it was the solid ground of good "A's" that counted.

The British film industry seldom made "A" pictures. They were either £250,000 supers or minus quickies. There seemed to be few people in the business for any other reason than what they could personally get out of it. No one could be bothered to make straightforward, good, unpretentious films. Strange to say there were no quick successes, and the opportunists had the pleasure of running our film business. When they failed it wasn't their fault—the English climate makes exteriors impossible—there are no English stars—the English cameramen are no good, the studios badly designed—the laboratories ruin anything that the English cameramen might get on the film, and the sound—why, even American systems don't work properly over here.

And so we have seen them come and go—go slowly as they bled the market white—go quickly when the war started. Now that most of the success merchants have left, there have been a series of good solid English "A" pictures: *Gaslight, Love on the Dole, Quiet Wedding, Freedom Radio, Night Train to Munich, Girl in the News,* and now *Kipps*. To a certain extent the Quota Act has been responsible for these pictures. The renters still had to fulfil their quotas and failing any Germans, Hungarians, or Roumanians, they gave the films to English technicians.

Kipps is the kind of film that could only have been made by English technicians. It is a story of a draper's shop; the polite households of Folkestone; a draper's assistant and a parlour-maid. It has no spectacular scenes, no night clubs, no ballrooms. It is the story of ordinary people doing ordinary things. From the time Kipps starts as an apprentice, to the time he leaves as an improver, you get a fairly good impression of what a shop assistant's life was like in 1900. From 8 to 8 during weekdays, 8 to 9.30 on Saturdays; the only holidays—Bank Holidays. The scenes in the staff bedroom are very pleasant, with Edward Rigby cutting his toenails with a pair of tailor's shears, and complaining bitterly as the lights are turned out punctually at 10.30 that he is only half way through his left foot.

The whole film has a very human atmosphere about it, and the impression you carry away is one of a crowd of people you have known. No one is particularly villainous, no one is particularly heroic. It is an English film about English people, made by English technicians. Producer: Edward Black. Director: Carol Reed. Writer: Sidney Gilliat. Camera: Arthur Crabtree. The sets and decor by Cecil Beaton are perfect.

It disproves all the theories of the "failures" about film making in England. *Kipps* is not perfect, but it is so good that it would be unfair to pick on the one or two weak spots. Given two years more of production of this kind of film, the British film industry should be back on its feet again, providing, of course, that all its technicians are not called up; and providing the scroungers do not see what is going on and brave the war by coming back for their pickings.

BANNED BY CENSOR

The position of historical films in India. Reprinted from the January issue of the Journal of the Indian Film Industry.

IN THE ADDRESS, read in his absence, at the seventeenth session of the Indian Historical Records Commission, the Honourable Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, *ex-officio* President, observed that in the task of collation of historical records his sense of disappointment came from public indifference; that the idea that research must be left to a few professional votaries of history, and that the ordinary citizen had neither the obligation nor the incentive of useful service to the historian, was wrong; and that apart from the State the individual had a contribution to make in rescuing and reconstructing the past. Since the allusion to public indifference was meant to refer to all without exception we must make the attitude of producers of historical films clear, inasmuch as behind the production of every historical film a vast amount of research necessarily accumulates itself. In the first place the attitude of Boards of Film Censors is strange. In fact their attitude is the chief obstacle in the production of historical films in larger numbers than has been the case hitherto. It has been found that incidents, even if historically true, are not allowed in films as the Boards feel that the same are likely to offend various susceptibilities. Thus if a film depicting the death of Afzal Khan at the hands of Shivaji, which has been proved today to have been the result of self-defence; if a film showing the romance that suggested itself between Zebunnissa, the daughter of Aurangzeb, and Shivaji; if a film showing the Mahrattas and the Mohammedans at battle; if a film paying tribute to the unparalleled valour of the young Queen of Jhansi; or if a film glorifying the sense of national patriotism that was behind the rebellion of 1857; were to be produced, it would not be certified by our Boards of Film Censors. The Boards will not even allow exhibition of biographical films of Tilak and other departed patriots of India. For they are afraid that the exhibition of such films might electrify the nation into a new wave of patriotism detrimental to the best interests of the Government of India who will themselves not go by the remark of the Good Queen Bess of England that her subjects were not so foolish as to revolt against her because of a drama which the then Lord Chamberlain had proscribed as being seditious. The Bombay incident is well known of the drama based on the escape of Shivaji from the captivity of Aurangzeb, in which the latter's daughter was shown in certain romantic scenes. The scenes caused a riot which was entirely avoidable with

police assistance, the actors had to flee for their lives, and the drama had to be withdrawn. This led the author to annihilate historical truth and transform the daughter of Aurangzeb into a fictitious daughter of the Hindu Raja Jaysingh whom Aurangzeb loved as his own. Of course this untruth was palatable because Aurangzeb was shown tolerant enough to love a Hindu girl as his own daughter. The manhandling of the picture *Sambhaji* by the Censors, which consequently failed at the box office and shook the financial foundation of the producer is well known. Because historical truth is not allowed on the screen, no film producer dare to lose a fortune after it and waste that vast amount of research which should be enough to earn a Ph.D. or a doctorate of literature for the individual responsible for it. The painstaking character of the research is often such as to dwarf the patience and perseverance of any member of the Historical Records Commission. Then the State gives no facilities, such as the loan of army equipment, horses, soldiers, etc., except at unbearable charges, necessary for the graphic picturization of historical films, which, as a policy, is opposed to the policy of every Government in Europe, America and even Great Britain. And then even if a historical film passes through these difficulties and deficiencies the Government gives no protection for the peaceful exhibition of the film.

The film *Bhagwa Zenda* was prohibited exhibition at various places because, although every incident in the film was historically correct, the non-Brahmin element felt that the film intentionally gave the Great Shivaji a prominence second to that of Ramdas in order to insult the non-Brahmin community, today. In the result the film was a financial failure and although orders have now been issued that films once certified ought to be protected by district authorities under the Indian Cinematograph Act, the loss incurred by the film can never be recouped. Unless, therefore, the attitude of Government and the Boards of Film Censors changes and the Honourable Sir Girja gives an assurance that historical truth on the screen will be protected with the full backing of Government there would be little hope of the film industry or other independent students of research, who must be able to sell their material for reasons of sustenance, doing anything in the matter of removing the Honourable Sir Girja's sense of the public's indifference.

TELEVISION IN U.S.A.

We reprint, by courtesy of the *Motion Picture Herald*, news of developments in television. In Britain, wartime conditions have, of course, halted the development of television for home and cinema.

TELEVISION in motion picture theatres is only a few days away, according to the Radio Corporation of America and the Paramount-DuMont-Balaban and Katz interests are readying for the race to break to exhibitors' screens.

Thomas F. Joyce, vice-president of R.C.A. Manufacturing Company, announced recently the company's official bid to interest motion picture exhibitors in television for their theatres.

The Balaban and Katz-DuMont theatre television interests in Chicago announced recently that six special television receivers will be installed at various points in the lobby of the Chicago theatre. Television pick-ups will also be made inside the theatre. Meanwhile the company's main transmitter atop the State-Lake theatre building was reported to be nearing completion.

Television programmes on the special receivers set up in the Chicago theatre are expected to feature informal interviews picked up by a television installed in a temporary studio in the theatre and also carried by wire or transmitted from the main B. & K. television station in the State-Lake theatre building or from a mobile television unit.

B. & K.-DuMont "theatre television" at this time is by means of small receivers placed inside the lobby and elsewhere around the theatre; R.C.A.'s theatre television has advanced to regular screen projection.

The Allen B. DuMont Laboratories, a Paramount television affiliate, also has announced that most of the equipment of its New York station, atop 515 Madison Avenue, has been installed and tested and the company "is rapidly mobilising its technical and programme facilities for anticipated commercialised television."

Columbia Broadcasting plans to be on the air in New York by June 1st with its colour television system, according to Adrian Murphy, executive director of television. At that date delivery is expected of a small group of colour television receivers for field tests. C.B.S. announced this week that it is completing negotiations with several manufacturers for the sets which will be based on standards proposed by the broadcasting company.

The demonstration of R.C.A. large-screen television at the New Yorker theatre on May 9th marked the official opening of the company's drive to sell television projectors to theatres in key cities.

The New York area and three other cities have already been surveyed for theatre television. New York has been divided into 44 "zones". Projectors will be available on a "first come first served" basis with only one permitted in each of the designated competitive zones, says R.C.A.

In January, the first demonstration of the R.C.A. large-screen system was held in the New Yorker theatre, for members of the Federal Communications Commission and the National Television Systems Committee.

R.C.A. officials see two distinct television services for the future; one for homes and the other for theatres. Programmes for theatres are expected to be chiefly sporting events. For example, it was said that there are some 65 events at Madison Square Garden, all suitable for television, each year.

R.C.A.'s Mr. Joyce has stated:—"In the presentation of large-screen television promoters see the possibility of providing ringside seats to championship boxing bouts through television theatres in key cities throughout the United States. They visualise 1,000,000 or more people seeing a Joe Louis fight held in New York or Chicago. Of an even larger number of people witnessing a future baseball World Series."

The Paramount DuMont station in New York, W2XWV, has about finished installing and testing equipment, it was announced this week. The antenna is located 650 feet above 515 Madison Avenue, New York. The sight-part of the transmitter has a rating of 4,000 watts and 1,000 for sound (2,000 for F.M. sound).

Both 35 and 16 mm. projectors have been installed for film use. "The pictures are projected through loopholes in the fireproof wall, on to the image-dissecting tube of the television pick-up equipment." The television pick-up table is mounted on wheels so that it can be lined up before whichever projector is being used.

A remote pick-up transmitter, W10XKT, will be installed in a truck for use throughout the metropolitan area, the company said.

"It is the present opinion that much of the direct pick-up programme will be handled by remote pick-up," the DuMont announcement concluded, adding: "With the early delivery and installation of two more units, the transmitting facilities will be completed, and Station W2XWV will be ready for its début as an entertainer."

DuMont also has announced that fluorescent illumination has reduced glare and heat to a minimum in the television studios. DuMont engineers have installed 24 fluorescent lamps, totalling 960 watts, in the New York studio. For dramatic or modelling effects, one or more "baby" spotlights are added to the general fluorescent lighting.

Construction of the television antenna mast atop the B. & K. Chicago State-Lake theatre building, nears completion.

The B. & K. station, at present using low power and a smaller, lower antenna system, is engaged in experimental transmissions from studios on the top floor of the State-Lake Building.

Programmes are being broadcast daily at five p.m., but in the near future several such programmes will be telecast several times daily.

Many types of amateur performers and college dramatic players have appeared on the programmes.

Balaban & Katz's W9XBK uses the DuMont system of 525 lines per image.

W6XAO, Don Lee station in Hollywood, has resumed television operations. Programmes had been discontinued for some months pending construction of a new station and a change in the assigned television channel.

DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER

MONTHLY FOURPENCE

VOL. 2 NUMBER 6

JUNE 1941

DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER is issued only to private subscribers and continues the policy and purpose of **World Film News** by expressing the documentary idea towards everyday living.

DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER is produced under the auspices of **Film Centre, London,** in association with **American Film Center, New York.**

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We are prepared to deliver from 3—50 copies in bulk to Schools, Film Societies and other organisations.

Owned and published by

FILM CENTRE LTD.
34 SOHO SQUARE LONDON
W.1 GERRARD 4253

TRAINING FILMS

BY *Technician*

Without necessarily associating itself with all the views expressed in the following article, *Documentary News Letter* is glad to publish a contribution of such outstanding importance.

THE fighting Services have millions of men to train in a new way of living. These men must be taught new jobs—technical jobs of great variety—and taught them quickly. The men to be taught come from every walk of civilian life. A certain amount of selection into suitable types for different jobs is made; but still, in any group, intelligence and experience range widely. The Services, therefore, have a huge teaching problem, a mass-teaching problem. The recruit must learn a new pattern of social existence and new technical knowledge and skill.

The whole population is used to the film; that is, to the film as entertainment, as a stimulant and as a means of relaxation. Comparatively few of the population are used to the film as a means of instruction. The film has been used as a means of instruction to varying degrees, and with varying amounts of success, in the ordinary educational system. Experience in film instruction has been gained and recorded; and tentative conclusions have been reached. For film instruction it has been claimed that it standardises teaching at a high level. It can be a profusely illustrated textbook in which every fact has been checked for authenticity, presenting simultaneous visual and aural teaching, designed and checked to be easily and directly understood. It can be a lecturer and a demonstrator whose mood never changes and who is always on top of his form; a dynamic teacher rather than a static teacher; a means of presenting reality with realism, and analysis with clarity.

The economics of film production and presentation compel this medium to be a concentrated form of information (i.e. the longer the film the higher the cost). A film must also be concentrated and never boring, since it is impersonal and does not react to the mode of the particular audience. It can never be more than a partial method of training, since men do not learn to do things merely by watching and listening; but it can present facts vividly, authoritatively and accurately by the simultaneous double visual and aural impression. It can stimulate interest and it can standardise instruction on a high level. It can improve the quality of the human teacher by releasing him to explain and expand from an accurate, authoritative basis. In some cases it can provide instruction where no instructors are available. If these things are true, then one should logically expect a clear and vigorous Service policy in the use of training films.

Present Policy

Policy of a sort exists. All three Services are using films to some extent. Most units of the Services know something about film training. There is doubt, however, whether the policy is vigorous or clear; and there is a body of informed opinion which believes that the film is being used in a ragged unco-ordinated way and to a much smaller extent than is possible under present circumstances. There is little evidence that the experience of educationalists on the use of the instructional film has been used to mould film training policy or practice. The Services produce films themselves with their own units and employ the film producing trade to make films to Service requirements. The personnel employed both in and out of the Services are not necessarily chosen for their qualities as film makers or educationalists. Too much emphasis is placed on the cost of film and relatively little on quality.

Types of Subject

Consider for the moment the types of subject that can be taught by film, and the way in which such film teaching can best be used.

(*a*) Service life in general; its traditions; disciplines; the purpose and jobs of the fighting Services; their general organisation and administration; the relation of the part to the whole.

A recruit joining the Services has to make a profound change in his general way of life. He must conform to Service traditions and must learn to become a part of a unit. This way of life is imposed upon him and he must undergo a rigorous physical and mental training, the details of which are often dull and boring, if not positively distasteful. Sometimes attempts are made to explain to him the purpose of formalised foot-drill, or the purpose of traditions and etiquette, but more often he is merely ordered to do this or that, with little explanation or reason. In due course most individuals accept the situation and often, after some period, feel instinctively that it is all right. Clearer and more efficient preliminary training could certainly be expected if the means were available to explain to the recruit the reason and final results of seemingly dull and monotonous routine. This would then tend to be self-imposed, and routine willingly accepted. Films sincerely made by experienced teachers would certainly be better in their effect than the sometimes stumbling words of the officer or the shouting of the sergeant.

(*b*) The elementary routines of Service life; foot-drill; ranks and authority; uniform and individual equipment; procedures and etiquettes.

Service instructors in war-time cannot, of course, have the quality of their peace-time counterparts. The training of instructors is only paralleled by the difficulty of training recruits.

Foot drill, standard personal Service equipment, its correct use and maintenance, the organisation and authority of units, organisation and arrangement for feeding, billeting, treatment in sickness, leave, crime, etc.; all these things can be shown clearly and accurately by film as a basis for explanation, elaboration and practice ensuring standardisation and willing co-operation.

(*c*) Technical specialist training; such mechanical things as the internal combustion engine; the parts of the machine-gun; the handling of particular weapons; the maintenance and inspection of motor transport; the mathematics of artillery fire; anti-aircraft defence; aircraft recognition, etc.

This is the clearest and simplest use of a training film, but the emphasis of the present use might well be altered. It is not sufficient to use films on these subjects merely as an added luxury to be shown to troops as time and apparatus is available, or, for instance, when the weather happens to be unsuitable for actual practice. Of course, it is true that film training cannot replace actual practice; but if specialist courses can be designed so that a short film of perhaps 10–15 minutes duration can be used as an introduction to each section of the specialist course, being repeated if necessary for attention to special detail, then a standardised instruction on every part of the course is ensured. Thus trainees are introduced to and carried along with their subject in an interesting and vivid way, and instruction will not vary to the extent of depending on the quality of the human instructor. The film will, in fact, act as an authoritative source to which even the instructor must give true weight. The well-made film on this type of subject must always be better than even a good instructor—with the limitations of blackboard and chalk, of static chart or static model. Trainees who are sitting in the lecture room can, in fact, be taken instantaneously from the lecture room to any desired place, whether it is an aeroplane in the sky, a ship at sea, or a campaign in Africa—dynamic teaching rather than static teaching.

(*d*) The co-operation of individuals and units; how a gun team works; method of attack and defence of different objectives or positions; co-operation of aircraft with land armies; camouflage; tactics.

An army is a co-operative whole of great complexity. An individual or a unit can have little conception of the general operation of which he is a part, or of how his function relates to the greater whole. Each member of a gun team can see fairly clearly the part he plays in the operation of the gun, but the gun team itself usually has little idea of the part it plays in the plan of battle. Co-operation, therefore, comes of understanding, and is all the more willing when its purpose is known. The film, with its ability to range, to show widely separated units and their relation one to the other, and to present general pictures as well as detailed pictures, is an ideal medium to give the understanding necessary for complete co-operation.

To those who need to know something of tactics, the film can show animated diagrams, aerial views, and every other film device, in a way which no lecture room or model battlefield can possibly show.

General Considerations

So much for the subjects which might be helped by film treatment; but there are further important considerations. All these teaching subjects require teachers who must lecture, must demonstrate, must check progress and must classify and assess the results of training. All this complex of teaching and training must go forward at high speed; and the results, in terms of individual skill and knowledge, and in terms of individuals as trained units of a corporate whole, depend on several factors:—

1. The quality of the teachers.
2. The willingness of the pupils to learn.
3. The practical facilities of training; classrooms, apparatus, weapons, etc.

I suggest that sufficient experience with film training now exists for a clear combined Service policy to be established, both as to the type and number of films to be produced and the method of use of these films in the various branches of the Services. I suggest that such a policy would call for a much greater number of films to be made and a much greater use to be made of them; that such films should be used as an integral part of training and, in many cases, on specialised courses; and that film training should be the basis around which theoretical and practical training for the particular specialised courses should be planned.

Film Industry in Wartime

Assuming, therefore, such a vigorous Service policy, how can existing film experience and facilities be used to promote it? The British film industry, owing to war conditions and loss of personnel, is an attenuated structure made up of a large number of competing units of widely differing size and type of organisation. I suggest that in time of war this industry should have two main purposes:—

(1) The production of entertainment films; and

(2) the production of technical films.

Since the entertainment of the public by film cannot, at the moment, be carried on in its present scope without the use of imported American films, then under the present stressed conditions I suggest that entertainment films made here should play a definite part in the national policy. In other words, directly or indirectly they should be propaganda films. Films made for the Ministry of Information, the British Council, the National Savings Committee, all fall at the moment under this head, and it is logical to presume that all other entertainment films should have a similar bias.

Industry Resources

The other service which the film production industry can provide is in technical films and these must, under present circumstances, be mainly for Service training. I believe that an investigation into the resources of the industry would disclose that these resources would have to be used to the fullest and most efficient extent, and probably expanded to meet a vigorous Service policy. Producing units engaged on this type of work vary considerably in their resources of trained personnel, equipment and finance, and range from one-man or two-man outfits in back rooms in Wardour Street to substantial concerns with well-trained men, equipment and general resources. In some cases these bigger units are sections of still larger organisations; in others they are merely well organised departments in concerns whose main business is not film production but, for instance, electrical engineering. The experience and ability of the various units must therefore differ widely, and the quality of the product must vary accordingly. Service requirements for films also vary widely and, with the industry as it exists, if contracts could be placed on the basis of the firm most fitted obtaining particular contracts, reasonable results might be expected. However, in theory at least, contracts are based on competitive tendering, the lowest price getting the contract.

Co-ordination

To achieve this war-time function, the producing industry should certainly be co-ordinated. This means, of course, a survey of the industry in terms of personnel, general studio facilities, possibly some amalgamation of companies, and certainly protection of essential workers against call-up to the Armed Forces. It would be assumed, too, that one of the results of a settled Service film policy would be strengthening of Service personnel engaged on the organisation of film training, to ensure that educationalists and technical film experts had their proper influence; in contradiction to the present situation in which Service personnel seems, in part at least, to consist either of men with experience of film entertainment or of contract-men concerned with buying in the cheapest market.

Again, Service policy must determine the quantity and disposition of film equipment, the organisation of instructors trained in the use of film, and the economy of these matters by co-ordination between the three Services; and by using civilian equipment and personnel, such as ordinary cinemas, which now stand idle a great part of the day and which are widely distributed over the whole country.

All this means that film training calls for imaginative conception of its potentialities, and a vigorous policy in regard to Service organisation, film production organisation and supply organisation. The benefits of such vigorous action would not be limited to the Armed Services, but could apply equally to the Civil Defence Services, and would carry over into peace-time a magnificent organisation available for teaching new ways of life and new economies, to say nothing of the change-over from military to civil organisation which peace must bring.

DOCUMENTARY AND OTHER BOOKINGS FOR JUNE

(The following bookings for June are selected from a list covering its Members, supplied by The News and Specialised Theatres Association)

	Week ending
A Door Will Open	
The Tatler Theatre, Chester	21st
Big Idea	
The News Theatre, Bristol	14th
Cargo for Androssan	
The News Theatre, Nottingham	14th
Cass in Swing	
The News Theatre, Bristol	14th
Cat College	
The News Theatre, Nottingham	14th
Disney Cartoon	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	7th
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	14th
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	21st
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	28th
Don Donald	
The News Theatre, Leeds	28th
Fishing in Hawaii	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	21st
Fitness Wins series	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	14th
From Jim to Hand	
The Little Theatre, Bath	21st
Going Places	
The News Theatre, Bristol	21st
The News Theatre, Manchester	28th
Going Places, No. 74	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	21st
Going Places, No. 79	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	14th
Going Places, No. 80	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	28th
Health in War	
The News Theatre, Leeds	21st
Islands of the West Indies	
The News Theatre, Manchester	21st
Kangaroo Country	
The News Theatre, Nottingham	28th
Land of the Midnight Sun	
The Cosmo Cinema, Glasgow	14th
Lovers and Legs	
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	14th
Lives in Peril	
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	14th
Malta—Island Fortress	
The Tatler Theatre, Chester	14th
The News Theatre, Leeds	28th
March of Time, No. 10	
The Little Theatre, Bath	14th
March of Time, No. 12—Labour and Defence, U.S.A.	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	14th
March of Time, No. 13	
The Cosmo Cinema, Glasgow	28th
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	28th
Miracle at Lourdes	
The Tatler Theatre, Chester	28th
Nature's Nursery	
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	21st
The News Theatre, Leeds	28th
Old Blue (Secrets of Nature)	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	28th
On the Table	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	21st
Pictorial, No. 244	
The News Theatre, Newcastle	28th
Put Put Trouble	
The News Theatre, Newcastle	14th
Quail Quest	
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	14th
Reporter Investigates Liberty	
The News Theatre, Nottingham	28th
Roof of the World	
The News Theatre, Nottingham	21st
Safety First	
The News Theatre, Newcastle	21st
Savoy in the Alps	
The News Theatre, Leeds	21st
Screen Snapshots	
The News Theatre, Manchester	21st
Soak the Old	
The News Theatre, Leeds	21st
Story of Culross	
The News Theatre, Newcastle	21st
Stranger than Fiction, No. 74	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	7th
Stranger than Fiction, No. 75	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	21st
Stranger than Fiction, No. 84	
The News Theatre, Leeds	14th
The Ash Can Fleet	
The News Theatre, Nottingham	21st
The Milky Way	
The Cosmo Cinema, Glasgow	28th
The Old South	
The Tatler Theatre, Chester	28th
The Whalers	
The News Theatre, Newcastle	28th
Torrid Tempos	
The News Theatre, Bristol	14th
Ulster	
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	14th
Unconquerable Minesweepers	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	28th
Valiant Venezala	
The News Theatre, Nottingham	14th
War Front	
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	14th
The News Theatre, Leeds	14th
Washington Parade, No. 9	
The News Theatre, Aberdeen	14th
White Battle Front	
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	21st
The News Theatre, Leeds	28th
White Wings	
The News Theatre, Leeds	14th
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	21st
Wisdom of the Wilds	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	28th
Yellow Caesar	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	28th
You Can't Get Away With It	
The News Theatre, Manchester	28th

SIGHT & SOUND

TO THE PRESENT ISSUE HAVE CONTRIBUTED:

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Published by: THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE
4 GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C.1

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FILM SOCIETY NEWS

The **Belfast Film Institute** society concluded its season of six performances with a show which included Lotte Reiniger's *H.P.O.*, Clair's *Village dans Paris* and Shaw's *Five Faces of Malaya*, in addition to *La Mort du Cygne*, which was the feature.

At the annual general meeting of the **Federation of Scottish Film Societies** reports from the four operating societies, **Aberdeen, Ayrshire, Dundee** and **Edinburgh** were read.

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DOCUMENTARY AND OTHER BOOKINGS FOR JUNE

(The following bookings for June are selected from a list covering its Members, supplied by The News and Specialised Theatres Association)

	Week ending
A Door Will Open	
The Tatler Theatre, Chester	21st
Big Idea	
The News Theatre, Bristol	14th
Cargo for Androssan	
The News Theatre, Nottingham	14th
Cass in Swing	
The News Theatre, Bristol	14th
Cat College	
The News Theatre, Nottingham	14th
Disney Cartoon	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	7th
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	14th
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	21st
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	28th
Don Donald	
The News Theatre, Leeds	28th
Fishing in Hawaii	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	21st
Fitness Wins series	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	14th
From Jim to Hand	
The Little Theatre, Bath	21st
Going Places	
The News Theatre, Bristol	21st
The News Theatre, Manchester	28th
Going Places, No. 74	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	21st
Going Places, No. 79	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	14th
Going Places, No. 80	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	28th
Health in War	
The News Theatre, Leeds	21st
Islands of the West Indies	
The News Theatre, Manchester	21st
Kangaroo Country	
The News Theatre, Nottingham	28th
Land of the Midnight Sun	
The Cosmo Cinema, Glasgow	14th
Levers and Legs	
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	14th
Lives in Peril	
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	14th
Malta—Island Fortress	
The Tatler Theatre, Chester	14th
The News Theatre, Leeds	28th
March of Time, No. 10	
The Little Theatre, Bath	14th
March of Time, No. 12—Labour and Defence, U.S.A.	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	14th
March of Time, No. 13	
The Cosmo Cinema, Glasgow	28th
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	28th
Miracle at Lourdes	
The Tatler Theatre, Chester	28th
Nature's Nursery	
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	21st
The News Theatre, Leeds	28th
Old Blue (Secrets of Nature)	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	28th
On the Table	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	21st
Pictorial, No. 244	
The News Theatre, Newcastle	28th
Put Put Trouble	
The News Theatre, Newcastle	14th
Quail Quest	
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	14th
Reporter Investigates Liberty	
The News Theatre, Nottingham	28th
Roof of the World	
The News Theatre, Nottingham	21st
Safety First	
The News Theatre, Newcastle	21st
Savoy in the Alps	
The News Theatre, Leeds	21st
Screen Snapshots	
The News Theatre, Manchester	21st
Soak the Old	
The News Theatre, Leeds	21st
Story of Culross	
The News Theatre, Newcastle	21st
Stranger than Fiction, No. 74	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	7th
Stranger than Fiction, No. 75	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	21st
Stranger than Fiction, No. 84	
The News Theatre, Leeds	14th
The Ash Can Fleet	
The News Theatre, Nottingham	21st
The Milky Way	
The Cosmo Cinema, Glasgow	28th
The Old South	
The Tatler Theatre, Chester	28th
The Whalers	
The News Theatre, Newcastle	28th
Torrid Tempos	
The News Theatre, Bristol	14th
Ulster	
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	14th
Unconquerable Minesweepers	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	28th
Valiant Venezala	
The News Theatre, Nottingham	14th
War Front	
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	14th
The News Theatre, Leeds	14th
Washington Parade, No. 9	
The News Theatre, Aberdeen	14th
White Battle Front	
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	21st
The News Theatre, Leeds	28th
White Wings	
The News Theatre, Leeds	14th
The Tatler Theatre, Manchester	21st
Wisdom of the Wilds	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	28th
Yellow Caesar	
The News Cinema, Aberdeen	28th
You Can't Get Away With It	
The News Theatre, Manchester	28th

SIGHT & SOUND

TO THE PRESENT ISSUE HAVE CONTRIBUTED:

RICHARD DE ROCHEMONT
W. R. FULLER
HERMAN WEINBERG
BRUCE WOOLFE
MARY FIELD
EVELYN RUSSELL

6d.

Published by: THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE
4 GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C.1

WORLD'S PRESS NEWS

and Documentary

WORLD'S PRESS NEWS is already established as an authoritative guide on Documentary Films. Its crisp, forceful articles by experts are accepted as authoritative by advertising executives who realize the major place Documentary Films are taking in the world of advertising.

Big business men read WORLD'S PRESS NEWS and appreciate the extra service afforded to them by the regular "Big Screen" editorials and Film supplements.

A special section devoted to Documentary and Advertising films will be published in "Advertising World" July issue, and will be included in WORLD'S PRESS NEWS, as a supplement.

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ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER C. CARLTON COLLINS

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CORRESPONDENCE

THE FILM OF TOMORROW

SIR: Since the outbreak of war many of us have found it necessary to subject our values and concepts to a fresh scrutiny. War has a way of cutting through the phoney and revealing the inadequate. In movements of all descriptions this same process of re-examination is being undertaken where either necessity or a new and urgent comprehension dictates. In one instance it will lead—as in the case of "the political poetry movement" of the last decade—to disintegration proceeding from a consciousness of utter inadequacy. In another, it will prompt the discarding of all that is false, followed by a reconstruction and re-unification around the modified Truth.

Looking through recent copies of D.N.L. we find much to support the view that this process is operative in the world of documentary. Its covers contain a vital ferment. On almost every page there is evidence of critical inquiry, dissatisfaction, self-criticism and a wearied sense of documentary's present insufficiency. But from those whom we have come to regard and respect as the vigorous protagonists of the movement—only a disappointing silence!

Permit us to illustrate our meaning by reference to your last two copies. In a review of Hemingway's novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*—"the filming of this book leads you to a consideration of documentary's shortcomings . . . of how documentary today tends to be humane instead of human; of how the rich life of say *Housing Problems* is being watered down to documentary clichés lacking the real spark of living". Then George Pearson's article which, though sympathetic in tone, constituted a damning indictment of the muddled thinking which, at present, impedes a fuller development of the documentary idea. And finally, although perhaps in importance foremost, Bernard Miles's acute analysis of the relation of professional actors to documentary, "Are Actors Necessary," which, we believe, crystallises the feelings not only of unregenerate Philistines of the commercial film like ourselves, but also of many of documentary's ablest exponents.

Now the really important thing is that these three people, each approaching the matter from a different angle, arrive, one and all, at the same conclusion. William Wordsworth said of the imaginative writer that he ". . . binds together by *Passion* and *Knowledge* the vast empire of human society". The italics are ours. The concept is one which we hold to be applicable to the creator in film. It is this idea, the application of which the three mentioned contributors recognise as essential to documentary, because, at the moment, documentary proclaims the "knowledge" whilst rejecting the "passion"! And because they realise that if documentary is not to degenerate into a medium only for the display of a certain technical precocity, if it is to play a progressive part in making understood the urgencies of to-day and to-morrow, then it *must* widen its horizons, deal with the individual and accept the power and moving force of passion. This is the imperative, not only of art, but of necessity.

Norman Lee was a disappointment. A twice converted Saul of Tarsus, he emerges from twelve years of cinematic sin to re-affirm his faith in that wearisome old principle "no professional actors"! Just that. Nothing more. But a great deal of water has flowed beneath the bridge since Mr. Lee saw the light of *Drifters* and *The Fall of St. Petersburg*. The vulgar commercial studios have turned out great documentaries of which *Fury*, *Kameradschaft*, *Grapes of Wrath* and *The Long Voyage Home* are good examples. The "pure documentalists" themselves have been seen far from Olympus, peeping shyly from behind studio flats and even enacting scenes with "realist" actors—if never with real actors—amidst the corrupting, tinsel-tawdry artificiality of painted three-ply and incandescent lamps!

And friend Pudovkin who pioneered this non-professionalism in acting idea, has written at least one book containing his maturer views on the subject. If Norman Lee will promise to read it, we would gladly loan it to him. It would give him furiously to think.

No, the film, both documentary and commercial, has moved to an astonishing degree in the last twelve years. Now the war has provided a fresh impetus. We must not allow anything to impede its liberating force. The commercial film provided the thesis in the first place; the documentary its antithesis. Synthesis is the film of to-morrow, an amalgam of "passion and knowledge". Now is the time to dispense with dogma, to discard obsolete notions. And that applies to both schools of cinema. An alternative is to dig our heads in the sands and eventually expire from sheer inertia.

Yours, etc.,

ROY AND JOHN BOULTING

Harwood House,
Effie Road, S.W.6.

NEWS FROM INDIA

A SCHEME of visual education for the Bombay Presidency was inaugurated by the Governor, Sir Roger Lumley, a few weeks back at the village of Turumbha, in the Thana District, some 35 miles from the capital city. The Bombay Government have purchased a hundred projectors to be distributed among the revenue districts on a population basis. Each projector will be passed on from village to village in a given area so that it will be in constant use. Each fortnight a completely new 45-minute programme of films, comprising a newsreel and two other features, is being prepared and distributed by the Director of Information. As a beginning the first programme was released at five centres. As each fortnight brings a new programme five more projectors will come into use until in ten months or so the full hundred are employed.

Thus villages throughout the Province will receive an endless chain of programmes with a new show each fortnight. The films will be silent, for the use of sound projectors, besides being much more costly, is dependent on an electricity supply. The projectors operate on a six-bolt battery. Different languages are spoken in different parts of the Presidency, so that a sound film serving, for instance, Gujerat, would be unintelligible in a Mahratta or Kanarese area. But each film is being supplied with commentaries in every main language spoken in the Province, and arrangements have been made for the appropriate commentary on any given film to be delivered by a competent person.

The inauguration at Turumbha took place at 6.30 in the evening in a large tent and with about 1,000 persons present from the surrounding countryside. Three films were exhibited—one about the war, another showing the minting of money, and a third depicting city life, under the title of *A Day in Bombay*.

FILM ACTIVITIES IN NORTHERN AFRICA

A DESCRIPTION of the projection unit employed in Nigeria and other Central African territories to screen instructional and other films to the native population was given to the British Kinematograph Society recently by W. Sellers, M.B.E.

For the time being, Mr. Sellers explained, distribution is restricted to the use of kinema vans and travelling projection units in Africa. This calls for equipment specially designed to withstand the severe climatic conditions in the Tropics and to give reliable service over long periods.

All the vans are identical in design. They consist of a two-three ton, long wheel-base chassis upon which is mounted a large box-type body of special design. A large sliding roof giving an opening of 18 sq. ft. is provided for ventilation. Two 14 in. cone permanent magnet speakers capable of handling 20 watts each are fitted into monoplanar flares and mounted on to four counter-balanced steel guides. This enables the complete assembly to be raised through the roof of the van when demonstrating.

The vans are also fitted with disc recording equipment for the direct recording of speech or music for playback through the reproducer amplifier. Copies of disc recordings can also be made.

All switching arrangements in the van are made foolproof, and no difficulty is experienced in training Africans as operators. These mobile kinemas often go off on tour for as long as six months, and each one will visit as many as eighty or ninety towns and villages, giving talks and film demonstrations to over a quarter of a million people before returning to headquarters for fresh supplies and a short rest.

GOOD-BYE, STAN PATCHETT!

By REG GROVES

NEWS HAS filtered through from the Bermudas that Stan Patchett is dead. Maybe a drunken Jazz pianist or trumpet player in the States, or a broken-down, punch-drunk prize-fighter bouncing 'em out of a portside pub anywhere on the fringes of the Seven Seas, will give a second thought to Stan and say he was a good guy, but to your upright, honest-to-God citizen, it'll mean no more than any other line of print.

It wouldn't have meant anything to me but for Len Lye. In those fantastic days editing *World Film News*, I asked Len to write something about a film in which jazz played some part. Len said, no one could understand what the hell it's all about if I write it, so here's Stan Patchett to do it instead.

Stan not only wrote about that film—he wrote about boxing, and jazz bands, and jazz records, and books about all three, until there wasn't a magazine published big enough to hold all the things he'd written or wanted to write.

In his company I spent hours in the world that lies on the fringe of our metropolitan hurly-burly; meeting jet-black jazz pianists, and dope-drugged jazz trumpeters, and quiet, friendly men who get their living in the boxing booths.

His death won't mean much to most people, for the kind of work Stan did doesn't stay or live or become a classic, or anything like that. His minute-by-minute reports of big boxing contests, cabled to Australian papers, his stories of hoboing across the States; his fantastic tales of the geniuses of jazz, are here and there and nowhere: lines and paragraphs and columns that are as ephemeral as the police court news in any daily paper.

Yet Stan Patchett was very serious about his writing. The kind of writing that journalists do in ten minutes on typewriters in newspaper offices, or the kind of writing that is beaten into column-size by the gloves of prize-fighters, or the kind of writing that tries to explain the music that comes out of the heart and guts of drunken jazz banders, or the kind of writing that's about the flotsam and jetsam of life—that was something Stan encouraged others to do, and slogged day and night himself to do in the way he felt it ought to be done. And you can tell from things he said, and from the few gramophone record programmes he broadcast for a reluctant B.B.C. and from things he wrote in musicians' papers and wherever else they'd let him, that Stan would have done it one day, and might have added to literature something that in their own way and in their own time Jack London and Jim Tully brought.

But Stan has gone. Those books will never be written. And no one will ever know that those books might have been written. But if I had to choose the kind of man I'd like to have known, it wouldn't be the top-liners of the literary world whose names click a nice little formula in the card-index of the human mind. I'd have chosen Stan Patchett and oblivion every time, because somewhere in his craziness, his enthusiasms, his friends, his books, and his gramophone records, Stan had that genuineness in the midst of which is to be found somewhere, somehow, what life is really all about.

So long, Stan Patchett! And knowing how you'd hate *Documentary News Letter*, sorry there's nowhere else to give this metaphorical hat-lift to the memory of a damn nice guy.

LETTER FROM U.S.A.

A reminder of the purpose of documentary comes from RICHARD GRIFFITH, of the Museum of Modern Art Film Library, New York

OF THE MANY heartening voices that now come from England, *Documentary News Letter* is one of the strongest. We here in America have watched with admiration and with considerable astonishment the upward curve of wartime documentary in Britain, finding your movement better than ever under conditions which might have buried it out of sight for ever. The new documentary inspirations, which derive from the new community of Britain, have found eloquent expression in the News Letter—an expression one has come to count on hearing, month by month. It was therefore a shock to me to hear in April what seemed a fearful and discordant note. I refer to the two articles—two in one issue!—by George Pearson and Bernard Miles.

There is nothing discordant in the Messrs. Miles' and Pearson's expression of what they have to say. Mild and deliberate, their criticisms are wholly constructive: they wish to add to documentary's effectiveness, to strengthen its appeal, widen its range, extend its scope. But I look upon these two intelligent, civilised and even diffident articles as a flanking attack against all that has been built in the theory and practice of documentary over ten years of hard struggle.

Much that they have to say is familiar and, what is more, familiarly appealing. It has always been pleasant to play with the thought that documentary might solve its problems by a return to acting and the generalised dramatic theme. Some may remember that I too once championed both in the not-too-distant past. But the years have brought out the knowledge that those who berate documentary because it is education and not entertainment are asking of an apple that it be a pear. It is well enough if Mr. Miles and Mr. Pearson tell us that they like pears and don't care for apples. But in view of their experience, they of all people should know that a grafting of the two would result in hybrid—exotic, perhaps, but tasting of neither of its parents.

It is the *taste* of documentary that both critics find bitter. "Those dreadful pictures of real people in their real surroundings, who by their obvious self-consciousness make the spectator squirm . . ." That is, they make him squirm if he is looking for, not reality, but the *illusion* of reality. Miles and Pearson hanker after the illusion because, for very good traditional reasons, they believe it is the higher goal. Aristotle has said it all for them: Poetry is more philosophic than history because history deals with what is actual while poetry deals with what is typical. The quotation is not accurate, but Pearson and Miles will agree to the sense of its statement here. We must, in the fictitious art, search out all that is typical and make the spectator feel his identification with it. Any trick that is adequate to this end is justified. But this is not the end of documentary. Philosophy is as speculative as may be; science as exact as possible. In the art of documentary, if it be allowed an art, our aim is to present and substantiate facts, leaving the conclusions to the spectator. Our end, therefore, is always to convince that what we present *are* facts, not conclusions or speculations. For this reason the awkward self-consciousness of our "real" actors is an asset, not a liability. It is that very awkwardness that makes known the reality of scene and event, so that whatever is communicated by the film lies in the scientific realm—as fact, opinion, argument, but never as generality.

Thus with the other objections of Miles and Pearson. Documentary, they say, is a hard-sounding word—but so Grierson meant it to be. *North Sea* they say, is splendid—but it has long been a doubtful item on the list of our achievements; a moving film, but whom did it teach, and what? So too with the last objection. Rather triumphantly, both our critics point out that if we want "the applause of an emotional crowd" we must offer them emotion, and illusion. If we will do so, they promise us Wardour Street and a voice in high councils. But this most potent of temptations is the most ancient, and has been most ringingly answered. "We never meant to flatter the box office. We meant to force it," Grierson said, and the obligation has been carried out.

It has been carried out through the sacrifices of all concerned. It may therefore seem somewhat presumptuous for a critic who has not made those sacrifices to address the film workers who have. But I have seen in the new wartime films (which I extravagantly admire) some evidence that, in the stress of difficult conditions, the precepts of Messrs. Miles and Pearson occasionally prevail. Hence this quarrelsome outburst from an observer who loves fiction and document equally—when he is sure which is which.

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NEW SOUND SYSTEMS

Reprinted by courtesy of *Motion Picture Herald* (*Better Theatres*).

THE PUBLIC presentation of "Fantasound" at New York's Broadway theatre, in November, while interesting enough in itself as a technical achievement, was also a harbinger of things to come. Warner Bros. have since announced "Vitasound," with early inaugurals in both New York and Hollywood on their schedules.

Vitasound employs a control track, but only one sound track, and they are on the same film with the image. Others under consideration similarly have both sound control and sound pick-up from the picture print, but use two sound tracks. These latter provide stereophonic sound. Like these, Vitasound has horn systems, one at either side of the centre speakers, but in the Warner method all speakers, of course, get their signals from a single track, whereas in the two-track system, the recording on one track may be associated with one side of the image, that of the other track with the opposite side.

Vitasound is recorded on an ordinary track, exactly like any other sound. Additionally, however, the film carries a second track for control purposes, which is placed in the line of the sprocket holes, and carries a simple controlling signal for actuation of the variable-gain features of the amplifiers.

The special track works in this way: When the area between the sprocket holes is entirely opaque, the special second photo-cell is illuminated only when a sprocket hole passes through the special exciting light. Since there are four sprocket holes per frame, and 24 frames per second, a 96-cycle signal results. This signal is of maximum intensity when the area between the sprocket holes is entirely opaque. When the signal track permits some transparency between sprocket holes, the 96-cycle intensity is reduced, and when the region between the sprocket holes is entirely clear, the signal strength is brought to its minimum.

This signal, amplified and converted to D.C., is applied equally to both variable-gain amplifiers, but the variable-gain circuits in those amplifiers are adjusted differently and do not respond in the same way to the same control signal. One amplifier supplies the central bank of speakers, the other both of the side banks. The difference in the setting of their variable-gain circuits is so arranged that when the control signal is at a minimum, the central speakers play normally, and the side speakers do not play at all.

As the control signal strength increases, the side speakers begin to function, and at about medium strength of the control signal, they are playing at the same volume as the central speakers. Further increase in control signal strength (still more opacity between sprocket holes) adds amplification to both sets of amplifiers, which are then producing louder sound than they would normally give for the same sound track. At a maximum signal strength (complete opacity between sprocket holes) the automatic volume control of both amplifiers has been pushed up as far as it will go, and the system is at maximum volume.

Being of what may be called a "tri-sonic" type, this system cannot produce a stereophonic effect. It incorporates the advantages of increased volume range; it spreads the source of sound across the whole proscenium opening, or narrows it to the centre of the screen, as required, all by means of automatic control. The sound acquires a very marked increase in depth and "presence". The side speakers can be used to produce a background of off-screen sound, and to some extent to tie in the audible source of sound with the pictorial source in the action on the screen.

An intermediate system incorporating some of the advantages of both those previously referred to has been identified as "stereo-control" sound. This arrangement also carries a special control track on the ordinary film. In addition, it splits the ordinary sound track, which occupies the usual area, into two narrower tracks, playing into a dual photo-cell. The signal control track, placed between sprocket holes, consists of three control frequencies of variable density recording. The 96-cycle sprocket hole modulation is understood to be electrically separated from these control frequencies by filter networks. One of the sound tracks is amplified by the single channel which supplies the central bank of speakers, the output from the other is equally divided between two additional channels which supply the right and left speaker banks. Each of the three channels includes a variable-gain amplifier, the amplification being controlled by one of threee control frequencies on the special track.

The results from this system approach those that can be obtained from the full stereophonic set-up. The control frequencies can silence any of the three banks of speakers; hence the sound from the second sound-track can be made to originate at either side of the proscenium, or to swing back and forth across the proscenium opening. However, the two side banks cannot be made to emit different sounds simultaneously. The system, in short, does not have the full flexibility of the elaborate Fantasound set-up, but it gives all the results of trisonic sound, and, in addition, approaches the results of stereophonic reproduction.

In terms of equipment, it requires three channels of variable-gain amplification to Vitasound's two; three sets of speakers backstage, and control facilities for filtering, amplifying and rectifying the control frequencies. Like the trisonic system, it needs only modification of existing sound-heads, not separate sound-heads.

THIRTY MILITARY TRAINING FILMS IN PRODUCTION

THIRTY MILITARY training films are now in course of production, some having reached almost the final stage, and the production programme includes many more films. In spite of difficult weather considerable progress has been made and production will be accelerated as soon as possible. Most of the films are being made, and will continue to be made, by civilian film producing companies so that the army training films will be of a high technical quality and have the maximum instructional value.

The subjects on which training films are being made cover both elementary instruction and higher training; and embrace films on the various weapons and armoured fighting vehicles now forming part of the equipment of the Army, on the offensive rôle of all arms, supply in the field, water purification in the field, and the catering arrangements for the soldier of the present day. It is planned in this way to compile a complete and first-class library of military training films, in the production of which the closest co-operation is maintained with the other fighting services.

The Army makes use of civilian theatres for the showing of training films whenever possible, the hiring of these having been kindly agreed to by members of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association; but in order to make full use of instruction by films it is necessary for the Army to have considerable projector equipment of its own. This equipment, provided in peace-time and slightly increased during the first year of the war, is now being reinforced by new projectors, all of which have been ordered from British manufacturers in the United Kingdom.

BOOK REVIEW

Hocus Pocus. Noel Langley. *Methuen.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

I LAUGHED myself sick over this book, and recommend it to one and all as the funniest piece of writing about Hollywood, to date. It's about Pearl O'Hara, a good girl with simple tastes, who fetches up as a big star for the Spangled Banner Olympic Film Corporation. You can have your guesses as to which studio it is, but the executives are Messrs. Mozart, Blitz, Titz, Squitz, Kunz, Daughaus and Carmichael.

To give you an idea of the dialogue, get a load of this—

"The dictaphone goes again and he takes it in his stride."

"Who's there?" he says.

"Me, Mozart," says a voice. "It's Titz. That dame's in my office, what do I do with her?"

"Which one?" says Mozart, impatient.

"The one that claims you raped her," says Titz.

"I'm asking for names," says Mozart.

"Kate Lovejoy," says Titz.

"Oh, her," says Mozart. "Listen, that was never rape. We had an understanding."

"She says no," says Titz.

"Did she talk with a lawyer?" asks Mozart.

"Yeah!" says Titz.

"What did he say?" asks Mozart.

"He said it was rape, too," says Titz.

"O Kay," says Mozart. "Sign her up, not more than seventy-five bucks a week. Say, have you got anything for the fifth?"

Of course, if you don't like that style of writing you had better not bother. But it will be just too bad because the incredible manner in which Messrs. Blitz, Titz, Squitz & Co. conduct their personal lives, their script conferences, their New York bankers and the general running of their studio makes you wonder after all if fiction isn't stranger than truth.

The business of writing scripts will bring joy into the hearts of everyone except a producer. "All the producers who are sore because they didn't get the story to make themselves have a lot to find fault with, all in a friendly constructive way, but all the executives who hate D.G.'s guts, and can't wait for him to make a lousy picture and ruin himself, tell him he's got a wonderful script, not to change a word, go right ahead and make the picture as it stands, he can't lose."

There's stuff like this on every page. The pace never slows up. It's tough and dirty and completely crazy. None of the characters have any morals or scruples, everyone behaves like a lunatic; and it is dedicated to "the undying glory of that stalwart band of Hollywood Savonarolas who called their souls their own—the boys on the black list."

What more can you want?

Prophecy, Progress & Policy

EVER since the days of the Magic Lantern the *Kinematograph Weekly* has kept its readers abreast with the continuous advance—technical, artistic and distributive, of the picture industry.

It foresaw the possibilities of Friese-Greene's invention of the moving picture in 1889 and has welcomed the advance of British Documentary Films in recent years as a vast contribution to screen evolution.

Trace the trend of the Trade in the

Kinematograph WEEKLY

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FILM LIBRARIES

Borrowers of films are asked to apply as much in advance as possible, to give alternative booking dates, and to return the films immediately after use. H. A hire charge is made. F. Free distribution. Sd. Sound. St. Silent.

Association of Scientific Workers, 30 Bedford Row, W.C.1. Scientific Film Committee. *Graded List of Films.* A list of scientific films from many sources, classified and graded for various types of audience. On request, Committee will give advice on programme make-up and choice of films.

Austin Film Library. 24 films of motoring interest, industrial, technical and travel. Available only from the *Educational Films Bureau*, Tring, Herts. 35 mm. & 16 mm. Sd. & St. F.

Australian Trade Publicity Film Library. 18 films of Australian life and scenery. Available from the *Empire Film Library*. 35 mm. & 16 mm. Sd. & St. F. 3, sound films on 9.5 mm. available from *Pathescope*.

British Commercial Gas Association, Gas Industry House, 1 Grosvenor Place, S.W.1. Films on social subjects, domestic science, manufacture of gas. 35 mm. & 16 mm. Sd. & a few St. F.

British Council Film Department, 25 Saville Row, W.1. *Films of Britain*, 1940. Catalogue for overseas use only but provides useful synopses of 100 sound and silent documentary films.

British Film Institute, 4 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1. (*a*) *National Film Library Loan Section* to stimulate film appreciation by making available copies of film classics. 35 mm., 16mm. Sd. & St. H. (*b*) *Collection of Educational Films*. The Institute has a small collection of educational films not available from other sources. 35 mm., 16 mm. Sd. & St. H.

British Instructional Films, 111 Wardour Street, W.1. Feature films; Pathé Gazettes and Pathetones; a good collection of nature films. A new catalogue is in preparation. 16 mm. Sd. & St. H.

Canadian Pacific Film Library. 15 films of Canadian life and scenery. Available from the *Empire Film Library*. 16 mm. Sd. & St. F.

Canadian Government Exhibitions and Publicity. A wide variety of films. Available from the *Empire Film Library*.

Central Film Library, Imperial Institute, S.W.7. Has absorbed the *Empire Film Library* and the *G.P.O. Film Library*. Also contains all new M.O.I. non-theatrical films. No general catalogue yet issued. A hand list of M.O.I. films is available. 35 mm. & 16 mm. Sd. & St. F.

Coal Utilisation Joint Council, General Buildings, Aldwych, London, W.C.2. Films on production of British coal and miners' welfare. 35 mm. & 16 mm. Sd. F.

Crookes' Laboratories, Gorst Road, Park Royal, N.W.10. *Colloids in Medicine*. 35 mm. & 16 mm. Sd. F.

Dartington Hall Film Unit, Totnes, South Devon. Classroom films on regional and economic geography. 16 mm. St. H.

Dominion of New Zealand Film Library. 415 Strand, W.C.2. 22 films of industry, scenery and sport. Includes several films about the Maoris. 16 mm. St. F.

Educational Films Bureau, Tring, Herts. A selection of all types of film. 35 mm. & 16 mm. Sd. & St. F.

Educational General Services, 37 Golden Square, W.1. A wide selection of films, particularly of overseas interest. Some prints for sale. 16 mm. & St. H.

Electrical Development Association, 2 Savoy Hill, Strand, W.C.2. Four films of electrical interest. Further films of direct advertising appeal are available to members of the Association only. 16 mm. Sd. & St. F.

Empire Film Library. Films primarily of Empire interest, with a useful subject index. Now merged with the *Central Film Library*. 16 mm. and a few 35 mm. Sd. & St. F.

Film Centre, 34 Soho Square, W.1. *Mouvements Vibratoires*. A film on simple harmonic motion. French captions. 35 mm. & 16 mm. St. H.

Ford Film Library, Dagenham, Essex. Some 50 films of travel, engineering, scientific and comedy interest. 35 mm. & 16 mm. Sd. & St. F.

Gaumont-British Equipments, Film House, Wardour Street, W.1. Many films on scientific subjects, geography, hygiene, history, language, natural history, sport. Also feature films. 35 mm. & 16 mm. Sd. & St. H.

G.P.O. Film Library. Over 100 films, mostly centred round communications. Now merged with the *Central Film Library*. 35 mm., 16mm. Sd. & St. F.

Kodak, Ltd., Kingsway, W.C.2. (*a*) *Kodascope Library*. Instructional, documentary, feature, western, comedy. Strong on early American comedies. 16 mm. & 8 mm. St. H. (A separate *List of Educational Films*, extracted from the above, is also published. A number of films have teaching notes.) (*b*) *Medical Film Library*. Circulation restricted to members of medical profession. Some colour films. Some prints for outright sale. 16 mm. St. H.

March of Time, Dean House, 4 Dean Street, W.1. Selected *March of Time* items, including *Inside Nazi Germany*, *Battle Fleets of Britain*, *Canada at War*. 16 mm. Sd. H.

Mathematical Films. Available from B. G. D. Salt, 5 Carlingford Road, Hampstead, N.W.3. Five mathematical films suitable for senior classes. 16 mm. & 9.5 mm. St. H.

Metropolitan-Vickers Electrical Co., Ltd., Trafford Park, Manchester 17. *Planned Electrification*, a film on the electrification of the winding and surface gear in a coal mine. Available for showing to technical and educational groups. 16 mm. Sd. F.

Ministry of Food Film Library, Neville House, Page Street, S.W,1, or from District Officers. 23 films mostly on cooking, nutrition and kindred subjects. 35 mm. & 16 mm. Sd. & St. F.

Pathescope, North Circular Road, Cricklewood, N.W.2. Wide selection of silent films, including cartoons, comedies, drama, documentary, travel, sport. Also good selection of early American and German films. 9.5 mm. Sd. & St. H.

Petroleum Films Bureau, 15 Hay Hill, Berkeley Square, W.1. Some 25 technical and documentary films. 35 mm. & 16 mm. Sd. & St. F.

Religious Film Library, Church Walk, Dunstable, Beds. Films of religious and temperance appeal. Also list of supporting films from other sources. 35 mm. & 16 mm. Sd. & St. H.

Scottish Central Film Library, 2 Newton Place, Charing Cross, Glasgow, C.3. A wide selection of teaching films from many sources. Contains some silent Scots films not listed elsewhere. Library available to groups in Scotland only. 16 mm. Sd. & St. H.

Sound-Film Services, 27 Charles Street, Cardiff. Library of selected films including Massingham's *And So to Work*. *Rome* and *Sahara* have French commentaries. 16 mm. Sd. H.

South African Railways Publicity and Travel Bureau, South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, W.C.2. 10 films of travel and general interest. 35 mm. & 16 mm. Sd. & 4 St. versions. F.

Southern Railway, General Manager's Office, Waterloo Station, S.E.1. Seven films (one in colour) including *Building an Electric Coach*, *South African Fruit* (Southampton Docks to Covent Garden), and films on seaside towns. 16 mm. St. F.

Wallace Heaton, Ltd., 127 New Bond Street, W.1. Three catalogues. Sound 16 mm., silent 16 mm., silent 9.5 mm. Sound catalogue contains number of American feature films, including *Thunder Over Mexico*, and some shorts. Silent 16 mm. catalogue contains first-class list of early American, German and Russian features and shorts, 9.5 catalogue has number of early German films and wide selection of early American and English slapstick comedies. 16 mm. & 9.5 mm. Sd. & St. H.

Workers' Film Association, 145 Wardour Street, W1. Films of democratic and co-operative interest. Notes and suggestions for complete programmes. Some prints for sale. 35 mm. & 16 mm. Sd. & St. H.

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Owned and published by Film Centre Ltd., 34 Soho Square, London, W.1, and printed by Simson Shand Ltd., the Shenval Press, London and Hertford